

Snap Shots At London

**By
Henry
Mott**

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‘ SNAP-SHOTS ’
AT LONDON

To John Reade Esq
With the Author's compliments.

Montreal

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'SNAP-SHOTS' AT LONDON

A PAPER READ AT
A MEETING OF THE
WOMEN'S CLUB, MON-
TREAL, NOVEMBER
THE TWENTY-THIRD
MDCCCXCVI

BY HENRY MOTT, AS-
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‘SNAP-SHOTS’
AT LONDON

As an old London schoolboy, I have always taken pleasure in the essay of Charles Lamb, discoursing on his old school, Christ's Hospital (the Blue Coat School), and have thought that, having had an uncle who was a schoolfellow with Charles Lamb, and Coleridge, and Leigh Hunt; and, at a later date, a brother, who went through the same school; and having myself passed through another old London Foundation School, viz., Merchant Taylor's, I might perhaps claim a prescriptive right to gossip about London—years ago. I have, however, felt some diffidence about setting myself to the task, because of the very frequent recurrence of the personal pronoun ‘I;’ and again, some of my friends might be curious to learn my age,—however, ‘nothing venture, nothing win,’ so I will endeavour to record some early recollections of the ‘great wen,’ as William Cobbett termed the mighty city.

I was talking recently with a gentleman who visited England last summer, and he was telling me very fluently about what he saw in London. I asked how long he stayed in the great metropolis, and he told me

‘sixteen days.’ As I held an intimate acquaintance with it for well-nigh thirty years, I thought that, apart from its growth and improvements during later years, I might fairly claim to know something about it.

When ‘London’ is mentioned, the mind instinctively conjures up a picture something like the familiar cut on the cover of the *Illustrated London News*—a dark picture of river bridges, smoke-begrimed houses, gloomy skies, all lorded over in a ponderous way by the dome of St Paul’s. One thinks of London as the vastest camp of men that ever sun shone on; as the home of fogs which have no rivals anywhere else in the realms either of fact or fancy; as a place of gigantic crowds, of persistent rains, of heavy eating and drinking, of fabulous wealth and hideous poverty, of marvellous business activity and unique historical interest; as, in fact, the most marvellous city in the world. Even those who know London best do not escape the conventional notion of the town, coloured a despondent brown by the fog, lighted by the flaring torches of the costermongers and hot-potato peddlers, peopled with Dick Swivellers and Lord Tomnoddys, and policemen from the ‘Pirates of Penzance.’

For the information of any one who has never seen a genuine London fog, I may tell that, familiar as I was with the streets of the city, I once lost my way in a fog. Endeavouring to find my way home, I came to a crossing where six streets joined or intersected each other. I went astray, and only pulled up to right myself on coming to a well-known landmark about half-a-mile out of my proper course. It has been said of a London

fog that a blind man proclaimed that you 'can't see through it;' and even the sharpest-eyed detective must agree with him. Fortunately, however, they are not of long duration, and the cloud lifts to give the strugglers glimpses of what they are seeking, and the view becomes a satisfactory and comforting one.

I call to mind the lines of Thomas Hood, descriptive of a fog :—

' No sun, no moon,
 No morn, no noon,
 No dawn, no dusk, no proper time of day,
 No sky—no earthly view,
 No distance, looking blue.
 No road, no street, no " t'other side the way,"
 No end of any tow,
 No indications where the crescents go,
 No top to any steeple,
 No recognitions of familiar people—
 No courtesies for showing 'em,
 No knowing 'em,
 No travelling at all, no locomotion,
 No inkling of the way, no notion—
 " No go," by land or ocean,—
 No mail, no post,
 No news from any foreign coast,
 No park, no ring, no afternoon gentility,
 No company, no nobility,
 No warmth no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
 No comfortable feet in any member,—
 No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
 No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds
 NO-VE-MBER ! '

During my schooldays I lived for several years in Fleet Street, directly opposite where the *Punch* Office exists to-day, and in my daily walks I met with many 'hair-breadth escapes.' I might tell of my having

been run over by a passing waggon, etc., etc., but that is not my purpose.

I may speak of London as the modern Babylon, bigger than Babylon. Lyn Dyn, the City of the Lake, which the latter-day Romans changed to Londinium—London—walled up from its possible invaders, 100 years, B.C. ; its Westminster Abbey and first St Paul's, begun centuries before Columbus discovered America ; its famous Tower, belonging as truly to the time of William the Conqueror and William Rufus, as to that of Queen Victoria ; its 'silent highway' of the Thames, with its enormous bridges ; the largest bank in the world, covering four acres of ground ; the oldest church in England ; the largest museum, covering seven acres, with the largest reading-room in the world ; its nine great parks ; thirty-six private and public picture-galleries ; its half-dozen palaces ; its dozen prisons ; its three dozen hospitals, and dozen dozen hotels : its forty-eight public statues and columns ; its seventy-six theatres and concert rooms ; its 750 acres of docks ; its thousands of miles of streets ; its millions of people ; its billions of property ; a world within the world.

Let me gossip about a few of the streets. Piccadilly—as we have it from 'picadil,' a kind of collar worn in the time of James I, not the 'piccadilly' of to-day, but the ruff of several pieces, widespreading around the neck and fastened together on one edge. 'Picaddilly and Paradise ! synonymous terms, sir ; 'synonymous terms ; but of the two, give me Piccadilly.'

This opinion of the 'old beau' shows that he was not in the minority.

Though only a few hundred yards long, it is wide enough and fine enough to make up for any deficiency in length. Here Horace Walpole was born. Here were the homes of Handel, Canning, Byron, Macaulay, Bulwer Lytt n, and Edmund Kean, of Baroness Burdett Coutts, and the Baron Lionel de Rothschild.

In the years when the great fire burned and the great plague raged—the years of the Second Charles—the old French game of *pailie mailie* (*pêlé mêlé*) played in one of the public streets, left a name which has outlived the play and players. Our modern croquet resembles it nearly enough to prove that there is nothing new under the sun. The present Pall Mall, crowded with associations of a great past in history, literature and art, is also crowded with superb club-houses, displaying more than the glory of princes' palaces; there are too many of these buildings, magnificent within and without, for time and space to take note of.

What grand doings were those at White's, when, in the year preceding the Battle of Waterloo, a ball, costing £9000, was given to the allied sovereigns, then in London, and three weeks later, a £2500 dinner to the Duke of Wellington. Of London club-life, that distinct phase of human existence, figures fail to represent the cost, comfort and convenience, as the imagination fails to realise its romance, and comedy and tragedy.

My aim is rather to speak of events which I saw and have a personal recollection of, and in doing this

I may, perhaps, not follow strictly a chronological order:—

If I were asked, ‘What is the first thing you remember?’ I think it would be my being taken, when very young, to see a man standing in the pillory; his name was Bossy, and his crime was perjury.

I have but a faint recollection of it, but it remains fixed with me, because it proved to be the last infliction of that punishment in England—and while speaking of the pillory, the name of Daniel Defoe occurs to us, he was fined and pilloried and imprisoned, and he wrote a hymn to the pillory which he styled,

‘A hieroglyphic state machine,
Condemned to punish fancy in.’

and Alexander Pope alluded to the circumstance in his ‘*Dunciad*,’

‘Earless on high stood unabashed Defoe.’

The next occurrence in order of date would be the opening of the present London Bridge. King William IV and Queen Adelaide were present. I was but six years old, but I fancy that the event is so indelibly fixed in my memory by the fact of a balloon having been sent up from the centre of the bridge, and as it was the first balloon I had seen, I could not forget it.

Before noting the streets of the city proper, I may tell that on the 16th October 1834, I saw the burning of the two Houses of Parliament,—all attempts to save them were abortive, and the attention of the firemen was mainly directed to saving Westminster Hall, and their efforts in this direction were fortunately success-

ful. The library of the House of Lords was entirely destroyed, but a portion of that belonging to the House of Commons was saved.

Amongst the records destroyed was the original warrant for the execution of Charles I, and the lovers of art had to regret the destruction of the tapestry recording the Spanish Armada, and also some ancient paintings. The fire is said to have originated from the flues used for warming the House of Lords having become unusually heated by a large fire made by the burning of the old wood exchequer tallies.

I cannot pass Westminster Abbey without recalling the 3rd July 1844, when the remains of Thomas Campbell, the author of *The Pleasures of Hope* were laid in Poet's Corner. It was a fitting tribute to the friend of Poland, that some earth from the grave of Kosciusko should have been sprinkled on his coffin. Campbell had taken his position long before he died. While yet living, he was amongst the ever living. His laurel was awarded. We may say of Campbell, in the words which he addressed to like-minded men to himself who had gone before him, and whom his heart appreciated :—

‘ Is he dead, whose glorious mind
Lifts ours on high?
To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die.’

It may not be out of place here to tell that I remember Campbell's son, Thomas Telford Campbell, he was weak in his mind, and was placed in a private lunatic asylum on the borders of Epping Forest, about

twelve miles from London, he was harmless, and used to walk about unattended ; he busied himself cutting a path in the forest with his pocket knife, he cleared all the underbush, only deviating a trifle from his straight path when a tree came in his way, and the bridle path which he thus made was popularly known as the 'Madman's Path.' I have seen him many a time at this work.

I remember the death of William IV, and the accession of Queen Victoria. The King's death took place in the night, and the big bell of St Paul's was tolling during the night. I call to mind that at school next morning, a cry was raised of 'It's a shame ! We ought to have a holiday, the "King's dead !" '—this ran like a fire from bench to bench until the head master was compelled to notice it. The master said that he did not know officially that the King was dead. The answer was shouted that a bulletin to that effect was posted at the Mansion House, and as a compromise, the head monitor was dispatched to see if this was correct, he returned shortly, saying that there was such a crowd he could not get near enough to read it, but everybody said the King was dead. The master then called for silence, and announced that he would take upon himself the responsibility of dismissing the school, and he trusted we should remember the occasion and disperse in a quiet, orderly manner—which announcement was received with cheers.

This was on June 21, 1837, and I am thus reminded of the visit of the Queen to the city, on the 9th November of that year. I saw the Queen on that

occasion, she was then a girl of eighteen, and her reception was an event to be remembered for a lifetime. The gates of the city, at Temple Bar were closed. The Queen's approach was the signal for enthusiastic and deafening cheering, which continued without interruption during the whole progress of the procession.

Of the notables in the procession, the Duke of Wellington, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, next after the Queen, excited the greatest amount of curiosity, and elicited the most cheering. At Temple Bar the crowd was immense. As soon as the Queen's carriage arrived at the gate, it stopped and a herald asked permission for Her Majesty to enter her 'loyal city of London.' The Lord Mayor handed the key of the city gate to the Queen, which was returned by Her Majesty in the most gracious manner. The gate was opened, and the procession moved forward.

The preparations made for the Queen's reception were of a most costly character, and the banquet at the Guildhall beggared description.

Three toasts were offered.

First, 'The Health and Happiness of Her Majesty,' after which 'God save the Queen' was sung, and the Queen rose, and bowed her acknowledgments. Second, the crier shouted the announcement,—'Her Majesty gives, "The Lord Mayor, and Prosperity to the City of London;"' and third, 'the Health of the Royal Family.'

This closed the entertainment, and the Queen returned by the same route, but not in state, a heavy rain had come on, and the crowds in the streets were

considerably reduced, and materially lessened the interest in the illuminations at night, which I well remember were very elaborate.

I might here add (as in parenthesis) that I have seen the Queen many times, and the last time, I remember, was on her return from Chatham, where she had been to visit the wounded soldiers in the hospital, after the Crimean War.

On January 10th, 1838, I saw the fire at the Royal Exchange, which was totally destroyed—the night was extremely cold, and the frost impeded the work of the firemen. It commenced at 10-30 P.M. and by midnight it had reached the tower. A strange sensation was produced by the chiming of the bells during the fire, the old tune,

‘Life let us cherish,’

and the national anthem ‘God save the Queen’ were heard in their turn amidst the shouts of the firemen and the people: and the bells, eight in number, fell one after another, as they were chiming—

‘There’s nae luck about the hoose.’

The fire was not got under until near noon on the following day. The Statues of the Kings and Queens which were placed in niches on the four sides of the quadrangle were thrown down and destroyed with the exception of that of Charles II which sustained little or no injury. In a drawer of one of the rooms, a number of Bank of England notes (to the amount of £2500 it was said) were reduced to ashes, but the remains were carefully collected, and the words ‘Bank

of England,' and the numbers of the notes were distinctly traced.

A bag containing twenty sovereigns was thrown from a window, and the bag breaking, the gold pieces rolled about, and were picked up and appropriated by some persons in the crowd.

The statue of Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the Exchange, which had escaped destruction in the great fire of 1666, was destroyed, its demolition was complete. It was a poorly executed work, but was always an object of interest, from the fact of its being the only one which escaped the great fire of London.

During the fire the bridges over the river Thames were crowded with people, and the flames were distinctly visible at Windsor Castle, a distance of twenty-four miles, and the fire, in another direction, was also seen at Epping, eighteen miles from London.

On Thursday, 18th June 1840, I saw the last review which was held in celebration of the victory at the battle of Waterloo. They were held for twenty-five years and then they were given up, out of deference to the feeling of the French people. The review took place in Hyde Park, and I distinctly remember seeing the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Soult ride down in front of the lines of soldiers side by side; every officer who had served in the battle, and there were several, the Marquis of Anglesey being especially noticeable, were decorated with laurel, and the private soldiers also had a sprig of laurel on their muskets. It was recorded at the time that Marshal Soult broke his stirrup strap, and a saddler in Bond Street being

sent to to supply another, that tradesman on learning who his customer was, sent him also a saddle that had been used, it was said, by Napoleon Buona-parte.

I was an eye-witness of the celebration of the Treaty of Peace, after the Crimean War, on 29th May 1856. The fireworks and illuminations were general and brilliant. All business was suspended, and from one end of the city to the other, all the leading thoroughfares were literally packed with people, pedestrians and vehicles from 9 P.M. until 4 or 5 A.M. the next morning.

The Chartist Riot of 1848 is a prominent event in my memory—the trouble arose through the Chartists having resolved to present a monster petition to Parliament for a redress of their grievances (so called), and a meeting was to be held, and the petition to be carried to the House of Commons attended by a procession of probably 100,000 persons. The right of public meeting and petition are unquestioned rights, but it was agreed upon that the petition spoken of should be carried only by a small deputation, and the procession was to be prevented by the authorities. The Duke of Wellington had charge of the preparations, and soldiers, with cannon, were stationed at various points, the bridges were guarded to prevent undue crowds entering the city, and it is credibly estimated that 170,000 citizens were sworn in as special constables, to protect their own districts, and in case of need, as movable bodies to co-operate with the soldiers and police. With exception of some sharp collisions in two

or three places, no serious riot occurred, through the precautions which had been taken.

Of those 170,000 special constables I was one, and I have yet my certificate of having been sworn in, and my constable's staff, to witness to the truth of my statement. I may add also, as a matter of history, that Louis Napoleon, who was at the time living in London as an exile, was sworn in as a special constable.

The year 1851 comes to my memory as an important era. The Great Exhibition held in that year was a show never to be forgotten. I cannot say how many visits I paid to it, but I know I was there on a day when 106,000 persons were present.

Another extraordinary event happened in (I think) September of that year, viz.: the arrival of Louis Kossuth the Hungarian, and his staff. They landed at Southampton, and all the world went to see them, and of course I was amongst them. Those I conversed with were well-educated men, talking English and French fluently, and I heard from the lips of one of them, perhaps the finest tribute which could be paid to English liberty, he said :

‘ You English people cannot appreciate your liberty as a foreigner can ; you are born in it, and it surrounds you, throughout your life, and you grow up in it ; but when we landed from the steamer we knelt down and thanked God we were in a free country, and we kissed your English earth.’

Soon after his arrival Kossuth visited London, and went to the Guildhall where the freedom of the city was presented to him. It was a sight not likely to

be forgotten. Kossuth rode, probably for six miles, the streets packed with people, he standing in an open carriage bowing his acknowledgments to the enthusiastic cheers of the people.

His speech at the Guildhall was a marvel of eloquence. We are told that he mastered the English language whilst in prison at Kutay^h, with a Bible and a copy of Shakespeare as his teachers. I had the pleasure of hearing him several times addressing public meetings, and he was unquestionably the greatest orator I ever listened to. I venture to give you two illustrations of his burning eloquence in words that are engraved on the tablets of my memory.

Speaking at a meeting where the walls of the hall were decorated with the names of several of the leaders in the struggle for the liberty of Hungary in 1849, as Klapka, B^{au}, Demⁱⁿbski, Batthyⁿ and others, looking around and reading the names, he burst forth in impassioned language, as if inspired, telling how the Hungarian peasants went forth into the battles, armed only with such weapons as came to their hands, the herdsmen even carrying nothing but the long whips with which they drove their oxen, and thus armed he said, 'they marched against the Austrian batteries, belching forth fire and death, and fell by hundreds, the unnamed demi-gods.'

On another occasion, when a copy of the works of Shakespeare was presented to him in ten volumes, purchased by a penny subscription, and enclosed in a handsome case, modelled after Shakespeare's house at Stratford, I was present, and Kossuth spoke to the

meeting of probably 5000 persons. In the course of his address, he said:—‘I will tell you a story.’ It can be readily imagined how a profound silence came over the meeting, and Kossuth continued:—

‘One day orders were sent from Vienna to Pesth, that it was necessary that some one in the gaol should be hanged, so as to strike terror, and to overawe the Hungarian people. The governor of the gaol answered that there was no one in the gaol at the time under sentence of death, and the order from Vienna was repeated that some one was to be executed; and so,’ said Kossuth, ‘they hanged Jubal, his only crime on earth being that he was the tutor of my children.’ Then in a tone which thrilled his audience, like one inspired he said—

‘As sure as there is a God in heaven, there will be justice on earth.’

The effect of this grand piece of oratory was heightened by the fact of Madame Kossuth and two children, a son and daughter, being present, and the speaker pointing to them as he uttered these words.

I may add that he had mastered the art of addressing an English audience so completely, that one day, at a time when the *Times* was publishing very spiteful articles against him. Kossuth, in one of his speeches said, ‘I do not care *that*’ (snapping his fingers) ‘for the *Times* newspaper.’

I call to mind another event which occurred somewhere about the same time. Marshal Haynau, the Austrian general, also visited London. He had gained a very unenviable notoriety for his great cruelty and

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ill-treatment of women. He had ordered several Hungarian ladies to be publicly flogged. He had also proved himself an atrocious tyrant at Brescia, which he took by assault.

During his stay in London, amongst other places he visited Barclay and Perkins' brewery. His bad character had preceded him and the men rose against him, and he experienced some rough usage at their hands, for which they were applauded. As he entered one of the stables a truss of hay was dropped on his head from the hayloft above, and coming to closer quarters one of the men seized him by the beard, and drawing his knife from his pocket cut a slice off his beard. Haynal ran, and at length escaped his angry pursuers by jumping into a boat on the river.

In Brussels and in Paris too, the monster was mobbed, and only saved by the interposition of a strong police force.

The streets of London presented another extraordinary sight on the occasion of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington in November 1852. The crowds had been gathering throughout the night, and it seemed as if all London was there, it was a sight worth living to see. The coffin was placed in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral within a few feet of Nelson. Although the Duke, perhaps, was not popular through the later years of his life, as a politician, he was respected by all for his unswerving truthfulness.

Everybody knew 'the Duke,' no better known figure was to be seen on the streets of the West End of London. He rode daily on horseback, attended by his

groom, and he invariably returned the salute of every passer by.

Another funeral at St Paul's, I may mention here, *en passant*, which occurred in 1857, that of Turner, the artist. However great he may have been, he was an eccentric, and had lived a secluded and strange life; he left, as you doubtless are aware, his paintings to form a Turner Gallery, and he also left a large fortune to found an asylum for decayed artists, but an informality in the will prevented this purpose from being carried into effect.

After his death, a number of persons claiming to be relatives, whom he had ignored during his life, disputed the will. I had the chance of making a copy of the will, and the document started out by declaring that 'I, Joseph Mallord William Turner, desire to be buried with my brother artists, in St Paul's Cathedral.'

Again, another never-to-be-forgotten event I beheld in Cheapside, in 1855, the arrival of Louis Napoleon and Eugenie; 'Napoleon the Little' as Victor Hugo truly called him—the most striking feature in the affair to my recollection was he, an ugly man, sitting in a carriage alongside Eugenie, a very handsome woman. He was never popular, and the reception was in marked contrast with those I have previously spoken of.

Before I speak of my old school and the heart of the city, I must say a few words about bygone actors and actresses. I once heard Braham sing 'All's Well,' and 'Come, if you dare!' and Madame Vestris sing 'Cherry Ripe,' and although they were past their prime, I could imagine what they must have been when at their best.

I remember Miss Helen Faucit (still living as Lady Martin), in the character of Rosalind, and Miss Ellen Tree (afterwards Mrs Charles Kean) in her favourite characters, Mrs Keeley (still living, over ninety years of age), as the original 'Jack Sheppard,' Mrs Warner (mother of Neil Warner), the finest Lady Macbeth I ever saw, Mrs Yates (mother of the late Edmund Yates), Mrs H. P. Grattan, Miss Woolgar, afterwards Mrs Mellon, and a host of others—and of actors, the elder Vandenhoff, Charles Kean, Phelps and Macready (as Macduff and Macbeth, respectively)—I might add that Macready's King Lear was in my estimation the grandest conception I ever saw on the stage. I also knew George Grossmith, senior, the father of the gentleman of the same name, who visited Montreal lately, and charmed us with his 'Entertainment.' Of singers I call to mind Grisi, Miss Dolly, Miss Romer and Miss Rainsforth and others—Mario, Lablache, and Harrison, the English tenor, before Sims Reeves, etc., etc. I was present at the first performance of Balfe's 'Bohemian Girl' in 1843, when 'I dreamt I dwelt in Marble Halls,' and 'The Fair Land of Poland,' although neither of them are very great songs, took the town by storm; it poorly expresses it to say that every boy on the streets whistled the tunes. I was present one evening at the performance of some other opera, where Harrison was the tenor, and during the performance, a voice in the gallery shouted out, 'Give us the "Fair Land of Poland,"' and the clamour became so great that Harrison had to sing this favourite song to quiet it. I may add that

the overture to the opera, at its first performance, strangely enough was encored.

As to Sims Reeves, I was present at his first performance in opera as Edgar in 'Lucia de Lammermoor.' If I am asked which I consider as his best ballads, I should say 'My Pretty Jane' and 'Tom Bowling' and foremost of all, his rendering of Tennyson's 'Come into the Garden, Maud.'

I should say that Charles Dickens was the finest elocutionist I remember; his reading of his own 'Christmas Carol' was a master-piece; and Thackeray's Lectures on the 'Four Georges,' which it was my good fortune to have heard, were beyond criticism. I select an extract from his description of George IV.—GEORGE IV.—To make a portrait of him at first seemed a matter of small difficulty. There is his coat, his star, his wig, his countenance simpering under it. With a slate and a piece of chalk I could at this very desk perform a recognisable likeness of him. And yet after reading of him in scores of volumes, hunting him through old magazines and newspapers, having him here at a ball, there at a public dinner, there at races and so forth, you find you have nothing—nothing but a coat and a wig, and a mask smiling below it—nothing but a great simulacrum. His sire and grandsires were men. One knows what they were like, what they would do in given circumstances, that on occasion they fought and demeaned themselves like tough good soldiers. They had friends whom they liked according to their natures; enemies whom they hated fiercely; passions and actions and individualities of

their own. The sailor king who came after George was a man; the Duke of York was a man, big, burly, loud, jolly, cursing, courageous. But this George, what was he? I look through all his life, and recognise but a bow and a grin. I try and take him to pieces, and find silk stockings, padding, stays, a coat with frogs and a fur collar, a star and blue ribbon, a pocket handkerchief prodigiously scented, one of Truefitt's best nutty brown wigs reeking with oil, a set of teeth, and a huge black stock, underwaistcoats, more underwaistcoats, and then nothing." And the peroration of the lecture on George III. was, I think, the most pathetic I ever heard from a public platform. GEORGE III.—Those round about him were obliged to set watchers over him, and from November 1810 George III. ceased to reign. All the world knows the story of his malady; all history presents no sadder figure than that of the old man blind and deprived of reason, wandering through the rooms of his palace, addressing imaginary parliaments, reviewing fancied troops, holding ghostly courts.

I have seen his picture, as it was taken at the time, hanging in the apartment of his daughter, the Landgravine of Hesse, Homburg, amidst books and Windsor furniture, and a hundred fond remembrances of her English home. The poor old father is represented in a purple gown, his snowy beard falling over his breast—the star of his famous order still idly shining on it. He was not only sightless; he became utterly deaf. All light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world of God were taken from him.

Some slight lucid moments he had ; in one of which the queen, desiring to see him, entered the room, and found him singing a hymn, and accompanying himself at the harpsichord. When he had finished he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, and then for his family, and then for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity from him, but if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason again fled.

What preacher need moralise on this story, what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it ! It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of Kings and men ; the Monarch Supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable dispenser of life, death, happiness, victory. ‘O brothers,’ I said to those who heard me first in America, ‘O brothers ! speaking the same dear mother tongue, O comrades ! enemies no more, let us take a mournful hand together as we stand by this royal corpse, and call a truce to battle ! Low he lies to whom the proudest used to kneel once, and who was cast lower than the poorest ; dead, whom millions prayed for in vain. Driven off his throne, buffeted by rude hands ; with his children in revolt, the darling of his old age killed before him untimely ; our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries, “Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little !”

‘Vex not his ghost, oh ! let him pass—he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer !’

Hush ! strife and quarrel, over the solemn
 Grave ! sound, trumpets, a mournful march,
 Fall dark curtains upon his pageant, his
 Pride, his grief, his awful tragedy.'

Away back in the ages, my delight was in hearing every public speaker I could possibly put myself in the way of, I should place first John Bright and Gladstone, Lord Brougham and Sir Robert Peel, W. J. Fox and Henry Vincent, the Chartist; for clearness as a logician, above all, I would put first Richard Cobden—for oratory, as I have said, I claim the first place for Louis Kossuth, and then Gavazzi, and next, for pure sterling English, without hesitation I would name John Bright.

I once heard Daniel O'Connell, he spoke to a meeting of probably 10,000 or 12000 people, it was in London, whilst he was under sentence and out on bail, pending the hearing of the writ of error in the House of Lords. O'Connell had passed through perhaps an equal number of people on his way to the theatre where the meeting was held, and when he rose to speak, he was received uproariously—looking the thousands of people in the face, he commenced in the most beautifully pathetic tone of voice :—

'It was kind of ye, and therefore ye did it.'

I might tell here an anecdote of O'Connell, current at that time, but which probably may be new to most of my hearers, at one of his monster meetings in Ireland, either at Tara or Mullasturast, when thousands were present, and the government were, so to speak, watching him and his movements, O'Connell, at the opening

of the meeting insisted that proper accommodation should be found for the reporters before he commenced to speak, a table was brought and the reporters seated. The reporter for the *Times* amongst them—O'Connell asked, 'Are you ready, gentlemen?' and on receiving an assenting nod, he commenced to speak in—Irish.

I call to mind another Irishman whom it was my good fortune to meet with. Samuel Lover, the author of *Rory O'More*, and the songs of the 'Superstitions of Ireland,' you will call to mind, 'The Four-leaved Shamrock,' 'The Angel's Whisper,' and others. He was remarkably clever in telling anecdotes. I venture to repeat one or two I heard him tell. He spoke of a man who had been sick for a long time, and was reduced to almost a skeleton, and his end was not far off, when, as an effort to lessen the acute pain he was suffering, the doctor advised a mustard poultice, and ordered its preparation, and to ensure its application in the exact spot where the pain was located, he decided that he would himself apply it. The poultice was brought, and the patient's breast bared for its reception, when Paddy, looking down at his poor wasted frame, burst into a hearty laugh. The doctor, amazed, reproved him for his levity, saying, 'How could he laugh, seeing that his life was in great danger,' and the patient replied, 'Well, doctor, I was thinking that is a large lot of mustard for such a small piece of meat'!

Another story he told was of a manager of a theatre in Dublin, who had been very kind to a poor old woman, and had granted her permission to sell oranges

and apples at the theatre, and other civilities. The manager died, and poor old Bridget attended his funeral, and there was probably no more real mourner present, as she had lost her benefactor. Looking into the grave, as they were about covering the coffin with earth, she exclaimed in her grief: 'Arrah, honey! you've got your pit ticket at last.'

It is not every public man has the opportunity of reading his own obituary notices, but this chance happened to Lord Brougham; all London was startled one day at reading in the papers of the death of Lord Brougham through an accident by the overturning of a carriage. Lengthened obituary notices appeared, some of the criticisms not being altogether complimentary. If I remember right his lordship was at Cannes, in the south of France at the time, so that it was probably not until the second day after the announcement that the contradiction appeared. (Strangely enough the *Times* newspaper did not publish the report of the death) and, moreover, his well-known face had for years been a prominent figure in the cartoons of *Punch*—from that date forward no caricature of Lord Brougham appeared in *Punch*.

I am reminded that a similar event happened with Eliza Cook, the poetess. An advertisement appeared of the death of Eliza Cook, and as an evidence of the respect in which the poetess was held, a crowd, estimated at 2000 people, attended the funeral; but, strange to relate, the Eliza Cook who was buried was not the poetess, who wrote a letter to one of the newspapers to say she was still alive. I may here tell that some

members of my family were intimately acquainted with the poetess, and I remember her father especially, he was a very cross, ill-tempered old man and had no poetry in his composition, his daughter commenced early and put forth a tiny volume of poems entitled, *Lays from a Wild Harp*, when she was not more than thirteen years old (I think). Her father used to scold her for scribbling verses, and locked her in her room, taking her books away and threatening to burn them—whereupon the daughter replied :—

‘ Burn, burn them all, it matters not,
There’s earth, and sky, and sea,
And those three volumes, Nature’s works,
Are quite enough for me.’

Her best known poems are ‘The Old Arm Chair’ and ‘The Englishman.’ They are both set to music, and are very popular as songs.

The first named tells its own story :—

‘ I love it, I love it, and who shall dare,
To chide me for loving that old arm-chair !
I’ve treasured it long as a sacred prize,
I’ve bedewed it with tears, and embalmed it with sighs ;
Would you know the spell, my mother sat there,
And I saw her die in that old arm-chair.’

The second song ‘The Englishman’ is a favourite, and is always welcome :

‘ There’s a land that bears a well-known name
Though ’tis but a little spot ;
’Tis the first on the blazing scroll of fame,
And who shall aver it is not ?
Of the deathless ones who shine and live
In arms, in arts, in song,

The brightest the whole wide world can give,
 To that little land belong ;
 'Tis the star of the earth, deny it who can,
 The island home of an Englishman.'

And so on through four verses.

The death of her mother, early in her life, was her besetting grief, and is a prominent feature in much of her writing. I cannot furnish a better illustration than in the following verses written by her in my sister's album :—

TIME! TIME! WHAT HAST THOU DONE?

My forehead is smooth, not a wrinkle is yet
 To be found as the tell-tale of Life's waning years,
 Not a hair has turned grey, not a record is set,
 That proclaims a long journey through trials and tears,
 Oh! mine is the season when spirit and thought
 Should know little of earth but its sunshine and flowers,
 With joy to look back on, joy still to be sought,
 And Mirth and Hope laughingly crowning the hours.
 But though short be the tenor I've held from above,
 Enough of dark sands in that tenor have run,
 To bid my soul cry o'er the wrecks of its love,
 'Time! Time! What hast thou done?'

Changes have passed that I weep to behold,
 Over all that was dear to my childhood and youth,
 Warm hearts are estranged, friendly hands have grown cold,
 And the lips I once trusted, are warped from the truth,
 My affection, that burnt like the God-serving flame,
 On the purest of altars that Love could illumine,
 Lives on, but now worships a form and a name
 That is wrapped in a shroud-robe, and carved on a tomb ;
 Oh! the world has too soon dropped its fairy-tinged mask,
 For the dearest of ties have been torn one by one,
 Till my heart and my memory tremble to ask,
 'Time! Time! What hast thou done?'

The memory of another of our minor poets is very dear to me. Thomas Hood was an intimate friend of my father and uncle. Those who regard Hood as a punster and a humourist only, are sadly mistaken, his poems, 'The Haunted House,' 'The Bridge of Sighs,' and 'The Song of the Shirt,' will stand as memorials of his name as long as the English language lasts. I well remember the 'old, deserted mansion,' which, standing in ruins, furnished Hood with the ground work for his 'Haunted House.'

'Some dreams we have are nothing else but dreams,
Unnatural and full of contradictions ;
Yet others of our most romantic schemes
Are something more than fictions.

It might be only on enchanted ground ;
It might be merely by a thought's expansion ;
But in the spirit, or the flesh, I found
An old deserted mansion.

O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear,
A sense of mystery, the spirit daunted,
And said as plain as whispered in the ear,
The place is haunted.'

I remember the old mansion at Wanstead, a few miles from London, where Hood was living at the time, and can bear testimony to the correctness of his description of the ruined and deserted garden, and the old story of a murder having been committed there.

Wanstead is situate on the borders of Epping Forest, and there was held there annually a venison dinner, and on one occasion my father and uncle were present, and Hood also. My uncle sat next to Hood, on his

right hand, and after dinner, a gentleman present sang Hood's song, 'Lieutenant Luff,' one of the most extraordinary effusions, brimming over with puns. My uncle said to Hood, 'That is your writing?'

'What makes you think so?' asked Hood. After a little *badinage*, he admitted that he was the author, and my uncle then asked him for an autograph copy of the song, which Hood consented to give him. The gentleman sitting on his other hand, overhearing the conversation, asked for a copy also, whereupon Hood replied instantly, 'Does it follow because I have the copy-right, that I have a copy left.'

I remember the publication of 'The Song of the Shirt' in the Christmas number of *Punch* in 1843, and it at once made the fortune of that publication. Hood sent it modestly to Mark Lemon, the editor, with the note, 'The enclosed has been rejected by two magazines; what do you think of it?'

I have mentioned Eliza Cook and Thomas Hood, in the first place because I was acquainted with them, and I wish to claim for them a creditable position amongst the minor poets of England, the more so because a well-known scholar in Montreal has spoken of Eliza Cook's verse as 'namby-pamby,' and another writer at Ottawa denounced it as unworthy, because forsooth a considerable part of it had appeared in London in a 'low, radical newspaper,' he himself, however, being a fierce partizan. And quite recently a well-known literary Magazine published in New York, speaking of a new edition of Hood's poems, said that Hood's verses are 'strange reading for the present

day.' True, they are strange, alongside the effusions of Rudyard Kipling and Douglas Sladen, *et hoc genus omne*. The grand secret of the popularity of Eliza Cook and Thomas Hood is that their writings go straight to the heart, and I venture to predict that their poetry will be treasured in the homes of the English people when a large majority of the rhymesters of the present day are forgotten.

Two other authors I wish to speak of before I get back to the streets of London—Leigh Hunt and Douglas Jerrold. Of Leigh Hunt I have already said that an uncle of mine was at school with him, and I may simply characterise his writings as delightful reading. I select as an illustration on account of its brevity, 'Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel.'

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase !)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel, writing in a book of gold :—
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the presence in the room he said,
 'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
 And with a look made of all sweet accord,
 Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
 'And is mine one?' asked Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
 Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
 But cheer'ly still; and said, 'I pray thee then,
 'Write me as one who loves his fellow-men.'

The angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next night
 It came again with a great wakening light,
 And showed the names whom love of God had bless'd,
 And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

I knew Douglas Jerrold too, and at a literary club,

of which I was a member, Jerrold was the President, and we used to have weekly meetings at which we held wit-combats and the fun was 'fast and furious.' I call to mind many of Jerrold's extraordinary specimens of epigrammatic wit, which were simply marvellous. Dogmatism he defined as 'puppyism arrived at full growth.' Poetry was 'thought in blossom.' A negro was 'God's image carved in ebony.'

I call to mind on one occasion in conversation, some one was spoken rather disparagingly of, when one present said apologetically, 'he is a kind-hearted fellow.' 'Kind-hearted!' chimed in Jerrold, 'why, he would hold an umbrella over a duck in a shower of rain.'

One evening it was said that Jerrold could make a joke on any subject given at random, and he was asked 'Can you give us something on the signs of the Zodiac,' and the answer came as quick as a flash,—

'By gemini! I can, sir!' (cancer).

He had a supreme contempt for anything like a flippant dude. On one occasion the talk was about songs, and speaking of some popular song, a dandy present said, 'That air always carries me away whenever I hear it.' 'Can no one whistle it?' said Jerrold.

There are a host of such witticisms recorded in the *Life of Jerrold*, written by his son. Albert Smith, who was at school with me, was on the editorial staff of *Punch* with Jerrold, and through the first volume Smith signed his essays with his initials A. S.; Jerrold one day said that Albert only signs two-thirds of his name.

Smith was offended, and a coolness existed between them for some time.

After this long parenthesis let me get back to the streets of London. I have already spoken of Temple Bar, which has now been removed—the street was narrowest at this point, and the old gate was a great obstruction to the traffic. As to Fleet Street there are a host of memories crowd upon me at the mention of the very name. Dr Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, John Dryden, Isaac Walton, and many others are old associations, but I must content myself with personal recollections as well as I can, but the names of eminent men connected with the Temple are enough to set one ‘thinking.’

The first mention of the Temple as a place for lawyers occurs in Chaucer’s Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. We have records of Sackville, Earl of Dorset; Sir Walter Raleigh, Selden, Lord Clarendon, Beaumont, Forde, Marston, Wycherley, Congreve, Rowe, Fielding, Burke, Cowper and Goldsmith, who died there, in Brick Court. There is one walk, near the fountain, in the Temple, known as Goldsmith’s Walk. You have all read Charles Dickens’s *Martin Chuzzlewit*, let me commend to your notice, the fifty-third chapter, where John Westlock meets Ruth Pinch at the ‘Temple Fountain,’ and how Ruth, while John was talking to her, fitted her tiny, precious little foot into a crack in the pavement; why, I vow, it is a picture so accurately drawn, that I could almost identify the very flagstone.

As I have said, during the whole of my seven years of schooling, I lived at my father’s house (then No.

122 Fleet Street) directly opposite where the *Punch* Office now is. It was then a music shop, and I might repeat to you an anecdote, told of the proprietor, Clementi (but I do not vouch for the truth of it). A young lady stopped her carriage at the door, and purchased some music at the shop, about to re-enter her carriage, she turned back suddenly, and said, 'Oh! I have forgotten to ask you for

'One kind kiss before we part.'

The story adds that the music-seller vaulted over the counter and supplied the request, and the lady subsequently became Mrs Clementi.

The *Punch* Office was first in the Strand when it commenced in 1841. By, I should think, 1843, it had taken possession of its present quarters. The manuscript copy of Hood's 'Song of the Shirt' is, I believe, still in the window, framed. In the preface to the first volume of *Punch*, written by Douglas Jerrold, he claimed, 'We came out as a great hint, and everybody took us.' Every Thursday morning, when the new number for the week was placed in the window, the office was besieged by crowds.

The *Punch* Office stands at the corner of St Bride's Passage, leading up to the church, which is one of Sir Christopher Wren's finest productions, especially the steeple, and the stained glass window, a copy of Ruben's 'Descent from the Cross,' is well worth a visit. In this passage, John Milton lived, at the time he undertook the education of his sister's children. The illuminated clock in the tower, was, I think, the first erected in London.

Richard Lovelace, the cavalier poet, died, it is recorded, in a miserable alley, near Shoe Lane, and was buried in the churchyard here. He was thrown into prison, during the ascendancy of the Long Parliament. He is, probably, best remembered by 'To Althea, from Prison.' The last verse, though well-known, I will quote :

'Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds, innocent and quiet, take
That for an hermitage ;
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free ;
Angels alone that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.'

In the alley where Lovelace died, there was a pauper graveyard, and there was buried Thomas Chatterton.

'The marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul, who perished in his pride.'

The grave bore no mark but the letters T. C. on a wooden post, but there are no intramural interments now, and the graves are all levelled, and the ground paved over.

A sad end for one who had exhibited such early indications of poetic genius.

By a singular coincidence, another less known poet was buried in the same graveyard. James Shirley, born in 1596. He was educated at Merchant Taylor's school, and met with varying fortune during his life. During the Commonwealth, theatrical amusements were entirely suspended, but after the Restoration

several of Shirley's pieces, of which he had written thirty-seven, were again put on the stage. The death of Shirley was remarkable. His house in Fleet Street was destroyed in the great fire, and he was forced, with his wife, to retreat to the suburbs, where the alarm, loss and anxiety they experienced, so wrought upon them, that they both died within twenty-four hours of each other, on the 25th October 1666, and were buried in the same grave.

Shirley is now only remembered by his poem :—

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things.
There is no armour against fate ;
Death lays his icy hands on kings ;
 Sceptre and crown
 Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill ;
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still ;
 Early or late,
 They stoop to Fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

n The garlands wither on your brow,
They ~~may~~ boast no more your mighty deeds ;
Upon death's purple altar now,
See where the victor-victim bleeds ;
 All heads must come,
 To the cold tomb,
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

The concluding couplet will be recognised as a favourite quotation.

I must add that Dickens has faithfully described this burial-ground in *Bleak House* as 'Tom-all-Alone's.'

I have said that I lived on Fleet Street, near the narrow thoroughfare called Shoe Lane, and the rear of my father's house had an exit through a gateway into this lane, and I remember that an undertaker had his shop on the corner of this gateway. There was a duty on newspapers in the shape of a penny stamp. During the days of heated political agitation, the land was flooded with unstamped newspapers, and although a very strict watch was kept up, thousands of them got into circulation. Many of them were printed in London, and they found their way to Manchester and other manufacturing towns, very much to the surprise of the police authorities. This had been going on for some time, when, by some accident, it was discovered that this undertaker was in the habit of sending coffins to the railway stations addressed to different towns, and these coffins were filled with these contraband papers.

But I begin to feel that my garrulity is growing tedious, and that like John Gilpin I have travelled further than I intended when I set out, and yet I have so much to tell.

I can only mention my recollection of the mailcoach days—before railways—the procession of coaches annually on the Queen's birthday was a grand sight.

I can just remember, too, an old time watchman, crying the hour throughout the night, and I have not

time to tell of the old London Street cries which crowd upon my memory.

On my way to and from school daily, I passed a mural tablet against a church in Watling Street, with the simple inscription:— ‘John Milton was born in this parish,’ and this brings me to Cripplegate Church where Milton was buried, the old church being yet surrounded by a part of old London wall, with the remains of a bastion or barbican.

My old school, Merchant Taylor’s, which is now in a new building at the Charter-House, was in my time in Suffolk Lane, off Cannon Street; it was founded in 1561. The original building was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666, and the school I was at for seven years was erected in 1675. Hebrew, Greek and Latin have been taught ever since the foundation of the school; mathematics, writing and arithmetic were added in 1829, and French and modern history in 1846. St John’s College at Oxford, was founded by Sir Thomas White, who also founded the school. Thirty-seven out of fifty scholarships at St John’s College, and other exhibitions at Oxford and Cambridge are attached to it. Plays were performed by the boys in my time. It is recorded that on one occasion, Beaumont and Fletcher’s comedy of *Love’s Pilgrimage*’ was performed, but under order that ‘this should be no precedent for the future.’ I remember the *Adelphi* of Terence, and a play of Plautus being performed. The school has ever been famed for its classical attainments and the sound Protestant principles of her sons whence they have been called

‘Loyalty’s Bull-dogs.’ When James II recommended a person suspected of popery as headmaster of the school, the company prevailed on the King to recall his recommendation; and in 1796, great was the scandal to the foundation, when two mischievous scholars hoisted a tricoloured flag on the ramparts of the tower, an act which was indignantly repudiated by their schoolfellows, and by one of the under-masters chronicling the affair in an essay which became very popular.

Amongst the eminent scholars educated at Merchant Taylor’s were, Edmund Spenser, Bishops Andrews, Dove and Thomson, translators of the Bible; Archbishop Juxon, who attended Charles I on the scaffold; Bishop Hopkins of Londonderry, Archbishops Dawes, Gilbert and Boulter, Bishops Van Mildert and eleven other prelates; Sir James Whitelocke, Justice of the King’s Bench; Bulstrode Whitelocke, who wrote *His Memorials*; Shirley, the dramatic poet, already mentioned; Charles Wheatly, the ritualist; Neale, the historian of the Puritans; Edmund Calamy and his grandson, Edmund, the Nonconformists; Robert, Lord Clive, the founder of the British Empire in India; Dr Vicesimus Knox, celebrated as the headmaster of Tunbridge School; Dr William Lowth, the learned classic and theologian; Nicholas Amhurst, associated with Bolingbroke and Pulteney; the celebrated actors, Henry Woodward, and the two Charles Matthews, father and son; Lieutenant Colonel Denham, the explorer of Central Africa; Adolphus, the barrister, who wrote a History of the Reign of George III; Sir John Dodson, Queen’s Advocate;

Sir Henry Ellis and Samuel Birch of the British Museum; John Gough Nichols, the celebrated antiquarian; Dean Mansel; Albert Smith and Sir Charles Bright of Atlantic Cable fame, and many others I could name, but whilst claiming honourable mention for these names I might perhaps be silenced with the record that Titus Oates was a scholar at the old school also.

I had the pleasure of receiving last summer, as a visitor to M'Gill College Library, Dr Welldon, the head master of Harrow School, where Sheridan and Lord Byron, and Sir Robert Peel were educated, and on reaching home he wrote to me a charming letter, as from one public schoolboy to another, showing how

‘One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.’

Why! there are enough reminiscences clinging around the old school to fill a volume; Dr Baker, the present head master, and Dean Hessey, who immediately preceded him, were both schoolfellows of mine.

Those who have read of the public schools in England will call to mind the system of ‘fagging;’ this was in existence at my school when I entered it. I was fortunate in falling into the hands of a gentlemanly young fellow who made my lot easy for me, and *au contraire* I had his protection. I should add that as my father’s house was within a walking distance from the school, I was a day scholar, not a boarder.

‘My schoolfellows! where have they strayed;
Where are the flowers of Hope they cherished?
Faded—as fairest flowers will fade;

Have they thus prematurely perished ;
Or has the world been all they dreamed
Replete with happy lads and lasses—
A jolly world ? for such it seemed
Through boyhood's rosy-coloured glasses.
A schoolboy's notion of the fight
For love, for honour, and for glory,
Are apt to be too dazzling bright—
But that's you know, the old, old story.

To youth, the world's a fairyland ;
A land that flows with milk and honey,
Where life-streams flow through golden sand,
And magic touches all to money.
To happy boys, the form of life
Is clothed like some enchanting stranger ;
They do not know the face of strife,
Nor recognise the shape of danger.
With ringing laugh the world they dare ;
They mock their lilliputian troubles ;
But all their castles melt in air ;
And all their boastings break like bubbles.

Where are they now ? I've no idea,
They joined life's race with thoughtless laughter.
Some may have won, but few, I fear,
Have gained the prize, they panted after ;
Are they alive, or are they dead,
Poor and forlorn, or famed and wealthy ?
And are they bachelors or wed ?
Infirm and weak, or strong and healthy ?

As waves that on the ocean beat,
Mingle their frosted foam, and sever ;
So schoolboys, who in boyhood meet,
May only meet, to part for ever !'

I have spoken of the pillory, and I have yet a still more painful recollection,—on my way to school I passed the Old Bailey, where criminals were executed, and as might be expected, a schoolboy could not go out

of his way to avoid such a sight, and I have no doubt that I am within bounds if I say I have seen at least fifty persons hanged.

It was in the days of public executions, and the scenes attendant on them were simply shocking. The private execution of the sentence was brought about mainly through the writing of Charles Dickens who was present at one of the disgraceful orgies—the execution of the two Mannings—man and woman—which I might add, I saw myself.

You have doubtless read the *Execution* by Ingoldsby :—

‘Hark, a sound comes, big with fate,
The clock from St Sepulchre’s Tower strikes eight !
List to that low funereal bell ;
It is tolling, alas ! a living man’s knell.
And see ! from forth that opening door
They come. He steps that threshold o’er,
Who never shall tread upon threshold more
God ! ’tis a fearsome thing to see
That pale, wan man’s mute agony.
The glare of that wild, despairing eye,
Now bent on the crowd, now turned to the sky,
As though ’twere scanning in doubt and in fear,
The path of the Spirit’s unknown career.
Those pinion’d arms, those hands that ne’er
Shall be lifted again,—not even in prayer.
That heaving chest—Enough ! ’tis done !
The bolt has fallen ! the spirit is gone—
For weal or for woe is known but to One.
Oh ! ’twas a fearsome sight ! Ah me !
A deed to shudder at, not to see.’

This is not the place to say more than to place on record the avowal that I am opposed to capital punishment *toto cælo*.

Another event in my life I desire to speak of,—just as I was entering manhood the agitation for the Repeal of the Corn Laws was stirring the people, and I, with my love for attending public meetings, entered heartily into the movement. I was a member of the Anti-Corn Law League, and attended every meeting held by the League in Covent Garden Theatre, and I had the opportunity of hearing all the foremost speakers of the time. I avow myself as being an ardent freetrader, having learnt my lessons direct from the lips of Richard Cobden and John Bright. Without a doubt the success of the agitation was due in a considerable degree to the spotless character of the leaders. It is worthy of notice that the Honourable Charles Pelham Villiers who was the first M.P. to move for the Repeal of the Corn Laws in the House of Commons, is still living, aged ninety-four, and is still a member, having been returned for the same constituency—Wolverhampton—for sixty-one years. I may say, too, that on the occasion of that first motion for the repeal of the obnoxious law, he only found one member (Joseph Hume) to vote with him. Mr Villiers was a quiet, unimpassioned speaker, conversational in style, once only do I remember his raising his voice, and rising to anything like eloquence. He had been speaking to an enthusiastic audience, and he closed his address by denouncing the Corn Law, as ‘an outrage on humanity, and a scandal to Christendom.’

Mr Cobden, the apostle of free trade, as he has been justly called, was calm and quiet in speech, but his facts were unanswerable. He was the clearest

logician I ever had the good fortune to listen to, and he taught the soundest lessons in political economy in so simple a fashion that every schoolboy could understand it; and frequently a pithy, terse, epigrammatic sentence would drive his argument home in an irresistible fashion. On one occasion, in the House of Commons, Lord Stanley, afterwards Earl Derby, father of our late Governor-General, was endeavouring to show that if foreign wheat was admitted free of duty, the farmers in England would be ruined, and land thrown out of cultivation, etc. In the course of his speech he said that one province in Russia (Tamboff) could send so many millions quarters of wheat yearly. Mr Cobden interrupted him with 'He means bushels.' He was called to order, and the noble lord went on with his speech. On the next evening, his lordship rose in his place to correct an error into which he had inadvertently fallen last night. In speaking of the quantity of wheat exported from the province of Tamboff in Russia, he should have said 'bushels,' not 'quarters.' 'I told you so,' triumphantly said Mr Cobden across the House.

On another occasion he said in the House, towards the close of a speech on some annual motion, that during the recess, he would hold a meeting in every county town in England, and he would propose a simple resolution, condemnatory of the Corn Law. This he did, and the resolution was carried at every meeting but one. When the House of Commons re-assembled he told of this, as an illustration of the progress the question was making with the people,

when Thomas Baring interrupted him with 'You did not carry it in my town.' 'No!' retorted Mr Cobden, 'there is not a schoolboy in the land who does not know that Huntingdon was the last place in England where an old woman was hanged for witchcraft.'

The great point lay in its correctness, for in 1716 a Mrs Hicks and her daughter, aged nine, were hanged at Huntingdon for witchcraft. The last sufferer was at Dornock in Scotland in 1722, and the disgraceful punishment was abolished in 1736.

As you know, the event which led up to the Repeal of the Corn Laws, was the failure of the potato crop in Ireland, and the consequent famine in that country. The ports were opened by an order in council, to admit corn, free of duty, and Cobden saw that this admitted the whole case, and I remember how he told this to a public meeting, and he said, 'We've got the ports open, and we'll put our backs against them, and defy the government to close them again.'

When the Corn Law was passed in 1815, there was great excitement and rioting. I remember Mr Cobden saying, as if it were a sudden thought with him!—

'It stands to reason it is a wicked law ; it was carried with the military in the streets.'

I am thankful that I had the opportunity of learning my politics from such teachers. As I have said the speeches were frequently lit up by flashes of humour that were irresistible.

Colonel Thompson, M.P. for Hull, was one of the popular speakers of that time. It was said that if Polish wheat should be admitted duty free, and corn

was as cheap in England as in Poland, the people would be reduced to the condition of Polish serfs.' The old Colonel simply said in reply :—

'It might as well be said that we should speak Polish.'

Another of his illustrations is so quaint that I cannot let it pass unnoted :—

'If Noah had shut himself up in his ark, and let his family eat nothing but what could be grown upon his deck, he would soon have had an outcry against population, and an emigration committee; and Shem, Ham and Japhet, would have been distressed manufacturers.'

'It can make no difference except in the size of the experiment, whether men are confined to the corn of an ark or an island.'

It was argued that foreign corn should not be admitted duty free, that England should be 'independent of foreigners.' Mr W. J. Fox, subsequently M.P. for Oldham, disposed of such assertion in the following style :—

'On a recent occasion,' he said, 'the dress of one of these sprigs of fashion was analysed. The hat on his head was French, the leather in his boots was French, his figured satin vest was French, and even the cambric handkerchief he carried in his pocket was French, until he was shown physically to depend upon the foreigner (silk, wool, linen, cotton) from head to foot.

We might follow up that view to the general consideration of his habits and modes of living, and thought. Where is the wealthy man really 'independent

of the foreigner?' Take him from head to foot; he has a French cook to dress his dinner for him, and a Swiss valet to dress him for his dinner; he hands his lady to her seat in the carriage, her blushes concealed beneath a veil of Brussels lace, French gloves on her hands, and a plume waving on her head, which never grew on the back of an English barn-door fowl; his wines are from the Rhine and the Rhone; his galleries are rich in paintings from Italy, or in statuary from Greece; his favourite horses are distinguished for their Arabian blood; and his favourite dogs are of the St Bernard breed; his education is from Greece and Rome, and even his religion from Palestine; the very fields from which he enjoys his revenue are manured with guano, as un-English; at last, if he rises to judicial honours, he bears on his shoulders the ermine which was never before on the back of an English beast; and when he is worn out with his denunciations of the foreigner, as in his cradle he rubbed his gums with coral from an Oriental ocean, so, after his death, his tomb is rich in sculptures in marble from the quarries of Carrara.

One more specimen occurs to me, and then I will get back to the streets of London.

At a meeting of the League, held on March 6th, 1844, Dr Bowring brought down the House by reciting a poem by Thomas Moore, who is known to us by his 'Canadian Boat Song.' I think it has never been published in any edition of the poet's works, and, as I have been careful enough to preserve a copy, I cannot resist the opportunity of using it:—

I'll tell you a tale of the southern seas, *it*
 You may laugh, or may cry at, just as you please.
 Scant was the growth of the bread fruit tree,
 On the beautiful isle of Owyhee,
 While, gift of Heaven, it richly grew
 O'er the sunny fields of Woahoo ;
 And it seemed as if Nature had placed the isle
 In reach of each other's verdant smile,
 That whate'er was wanting on either shore,
 From the other might swift be wafted o'er.
 The Woahooan nymphs arrayed
 In trinkets by Owyheean made ;
 While Owyhee well fed should be
 By Woahoo's sweet bread fruit tree.
 But, alas ! even happy isles like these
 Have a people upon them called grandees
 And where there are lords, I need not say,
 Things *will* go on in a lordly way.

Heard you that cry, whose withering sound *oh*
 Saddens the sunny prospect round ?
 From a million of voices it rings on high,
 'We starve ! we starve !' their fearful cry !
 Know you what, midst such fertile scenes,
 That awful voice of Famine means ?
 Oh ! list to me—in Owyhee,
 There were lords and squires of high degree,
 Who in bread fruit held large property—
 And of all afflictions, ills, and vices,
 Thought none so dreadful as low prices ;
 Wherefore they held it just and meet
 That the world should not too cheaply eat,
 Nay, deemed it radical insolence
 To wish to dine at a small expense ;
 And swore, for themselves and heirs,
 That happen what might, with *other* wares,
No bread should be less dear than theirs.
 In vain the Owyheean said,
 'My Lords, we much respect your bread,
 But with all due reverence for your graces,
 Would rather have cheaper from other places.
 In vain from the Woahooan shore,

Barques, filled with bread-fruit, winged them o'er.
'Twas vulgar, cheap, and taxed must be
Before 'twas fit for good company ;
Nor must the poor devils swallow a bit,
Unless they swallowed a tax with it.
And what said the lords of Owyhee
And the Owyheean squire-archy,
In defence of their joint gentility ?
Why, they said that they and their squires before 'em,
Had shone in the Senate, camp and quorum ;
Had all been rich, had managed to get,
As became their station, deep in debt ;
And thought it hard that men of reading,
Who had cost themselves so much in breeding,
Should now fall victims to cheap feeding,
Shorn of their beams of wealth and state,
To help low fellows to masticate.
'How little,' said they, 'the thoughtless poor
Can know what the suffering rich endure,
In bringing up dozens of young grandees—
In paying the horrible mortgagees—
To say nothing of assignees, lessees,
And an endless quantity of more of these
Uneasy things that end in *ees*.
And though (as honest Figaro says)
If a gentleman owes, and never pays,
'Tis just the same, be it great or small,
As if he, in fact, owed nothing at all ;
Yet, somehow, unless one *something* pays,
Lenders are shy of one, now-a-days.'
In short, if the bread-tax once was gone,
These lords and gentlemen 'couldn't get on ;'
And then it was hinted, awfully,
That if e'er in the Isle of Owyhee,
Bread-pudding in price should humble be,
All was o'er with the aristocracy ;
One penny, saved by clods who dine,
Being sure to bring all nobles to nine.*
Meanwhile, that cry, that dreadful cry,

* According to the old arithmetic process of 'bringing nobles to nine-pence.'

'We starve! we starve!' rose loud and high,
'Till—what was the upshot, all shall see,
In the second canto of Owyhee.'

I am not able to say a word about the London of to-day. I am well aware that within the last twenty years, it has grown to be a much more beautiful city than when I knew it. Of the thousands who visit London and Paris yearly, I believe that the majority will say when they return, that they were better treated, and better pleased with the English than the French capital.

I am sorry that I have not been able to do fuller justice to my subject, but the effort to tell of London and its glories in an hour, is like attempting to 'crush Olympus into a nutshell.' One grand feature in the character of the people of London is the obstinate stand they have taken in every age for freedom, and truth, and justice. Take my word for it, that if a mountain stood near the city of London, which was held to be a 'recreation ground' for the people, no public company nor corporation dare to interfere with the people's rights.

We have a remarkable illustration of this in the preservation of Epping Forest as a pleasure ground for the Londoners. Successive 'lords of the manor,' and even private individuals, had been encroaching on the forest bit by bit, by enclosures, when there came a wholesale attempt to stake off a large piece by a certain Lord of the Manor. The cottagers who lived round about, were enraged, and they threw down the fences of the enclosure, and one man, by name Willin-

gale (I knew him well when I was a boy) was arrested, and he was tried, as a test case ; he was fined and committed to gaol in default of payment of the fine ; the amount was paid by subscription and the brave old man carried from the gaol to his home on the shoulders of the people. The poor cottagers, thus robbed of their forestal rights of cutting their firewood, and turning their cattle, or pigs and geese on the common were not strong enough to sustain the struggle against the wealthy robbers ; but it chanced that when the intra-mural burials were abolished, the corporation of London had purchased a number of acres of the land for a cemetery situate on the borders of the forest, about nine or ten miles from the city, and this gave the corporation the same forestal rights that belonged to the poorest cottager, and so the city of London took up the cudgels, and after some years of lawsuits and at enormous expense, the right of the people was established, and the end of it was that on May 6th, 1882, the forest was opened by the Queen herself in person, proclaiming it ‘free as a recreation ground for my people for all time.’

The corporation was appointed as conservators of the forest, and a medal was struck in commemoration of the event.

I have told you how the gates of Temple Bar were closed at the time of the Queen’s first visit to the city ; at the risk of being tedious, let me tell you the history of this custom. You are all, doubtless, familiar with the story of Charles I attempting to arrest the five members of the House of Commons. They were received

in the city and sheltered there ; the King, little thinking what a hornet's nest he was bringing about his ears, went to the Guild Hall with a troop of soldiers, and demanded the five members, but although they were as near to him, as we are now to the opposite side of the street (the house is still standing where they were sheltered) the King had to go away without them. Again, the Lord Mayor of London is conservator of the River Thames from its source in Oxfordshire to the Nore, so the famous five members were carried to and fro in a barge on the river where the King had no power, and the House of Commons refused to give them up, and so Charles was defeated in his efforts to arrest them.

Now, let me tell you the outcome of this. It was enacted that no soldiers, or any body of men bearing arms, should ever be within the city without permission. A file of soldiers marches every evening from the Tower to the Bank of England on duty as guard there, and permission is specially granted for this privilege, and every sovereign since that time has confirmed this charter on his or her accession to the throne, granting to the 'loyal city of London its ancient rights and privileges.'

Later on (in 1770) George III lost his temper at some action of the city, and especially at some speech of Lord Mayor Beckford, and he threatened them with all sorts of penalties. A deputation was appointed to wait upon the King, and lay their grievances before him. The King was obstinate, and threatened that he would remove his court from London to Windsor ; whereupon the Mayor addressed the King, in his personal capacity,

and said the citizens of London were sorry to have incurred His Majesty's displeasure, but if he put his threat of the removal of his court into execution, 'May it please your Majesty to leave the river Thames behind.'

Those who have visited the Guild Hall in London, will have seen the monument erected to the grand old man, William Beckford—a full length figure, in the act of addressing the King.

That is the material of which the people of London are made.

In speaking in praise of London I am in good company :—

Bulwer Lytton in his *New Timon*, says :—

'London ! I take thee to a poet's heart !
For those who seek a Helicon thou art ;
§ Let Schoolboy Strephons bleat of flocks and fields
Each street of thine a loftier idyll yields ;
Fed by all life, and fanned by every wind
There burns the quenchless poetry—mankind.'

Alfred Tennyson, in *Locksley Hall*, sings :—

And at night along the dusky highway, near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London, flaming like a dreary dawn.

And in his Ode on the *Death of the Duke of Wellington* : he asks—

'Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore ?
Here ! in streaming London's central roar ;
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bier for evermore.'

And it has furnished Wordsworth with inspiration

for one of his sonnets on the city as seen from one of its bridges at early morning :—

'Earth has not anything to show more fair ;
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty.
 This city now, doth like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning, silent ; bare
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air,
 Never did Sun more beautifully sleep
 In its first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep,
 And all that mighty heart is lying still.'

I am proud to say I am an Englishman. I am not
 ashamed to call myself a—Londoner. I have told you
 somewhat of the noble stand the citizens of London
 have in all time made for freedom, and truth, and
 justice. Forgive me if I close this rambling effusion
 with some lines written by Thomas Campbell :—

'Men of England ! who inherit
 Rights that cost your sires their blood !
 Men whose undegenerate spirit
 Has been proved on field and flood.

By the foes you've fought uncounted,
 By the glorious deeds you've done,
 Trophies captured, breaches mounted,
 Navies conquered, kingdoms won.

Yet, remember, England gathers
 Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
 If the freedom of your fathers
 Glows not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in bonds of slavery,
Trophied temples, arch and tomb?

Pageants ! let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russel's, glory,
Sidney's matchless shade is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a hundred Agincourts.

We're the sons of sires who baffled,
Crowned and mitred tyranny.
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthright ! so will we !